

March 17, 2025

The Honourable Terry Duguid  
Minister of Environment and Climate Change  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON  
K1A 0A6

Dear Minister Duguid,

On behalf of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA), representing 38,000 farm families across our province, I extend our sincere congratulations on your recent appointment as Minister of Environment and Climate Change. Your role in provincial environment and climate change advocacy in Manitoba, and your role as Parliamentary Secretary to the ECCC in past positions you well to lead Canada in addressing the pressing environmental challenges of our time.

We appreciate recent confirmation from your Government that the interest-free portion of the Advanced Agricultural Payment program will remain at \$250,000 for 2025. Additionally, we commend the swift action taken by the new Liberal government last week in immediately terminating the carbon tax—both of which are high priorities for our members and for farm and agricultural colleagues across Canada.

Ontario's agricultural sector plays a pivotal role in stewarding our natural resources while ensuring food security for Canadians. As such, we recognize the importance of collaborative efforts between our sector and your department to promote sustainable practices and environmental conservation.

In light of this, we would appreciate the opportunity to discuss several key priorities that are of mutual interest, and which we highlighted in our recent federal pre-budget submission:

1. **Invest in a Climate Resilient Canada:** The OFA has long advocated for enhanced funding to support farmers in adopting Best Management Practices (BMPs). We recommend committing \$2 billion annually for five years to facilitate this transition, ensuring environmental sustainability and economic viability within the agricultural sector.
2. **Rural Infrastructure Investments:** Investments in rural infrastructure, including energy, transportation, and broadband, are vital for the sustainability of farming communities. Enhancing these infrastructures supports environmental initiatives by enabling the adoption of new technologies and practices that reduce carbon footprints.

3. **Farmland Preservation:** Protecting farmland from urban sprawl and non-agricultural uses ensures that farm lands continue to serve as carbon sinks and maintain biodiversity. Policies that safeguard agricultural lands contribute significantly to environmental conservation efforts. This is an issue across Canada and I share here a ViewPoint on the subject from earlier this year: <https://ofa.on.ca/newsroom/farmland-preservation-not-just-an-ontario-priority/>

We believe that addressing these priorities will not only benefit Ontario's farmers but also contribute to Canada's broader environmental objectives. We look forward to the opportunity to engage in a constructive dialogue with you and your team to explore these issues further. Once again, congratulations on this well-deserved appointment. We look forward to engaging with you in the coming weeks and working together to build a thriving agricultural sector for all Canadians.

Best regards,



Drew Spoelstra  
President  
905 379 5751

cc: Keith Currie, President Canadian Federation of Agriculture  
OFA Board of Directors